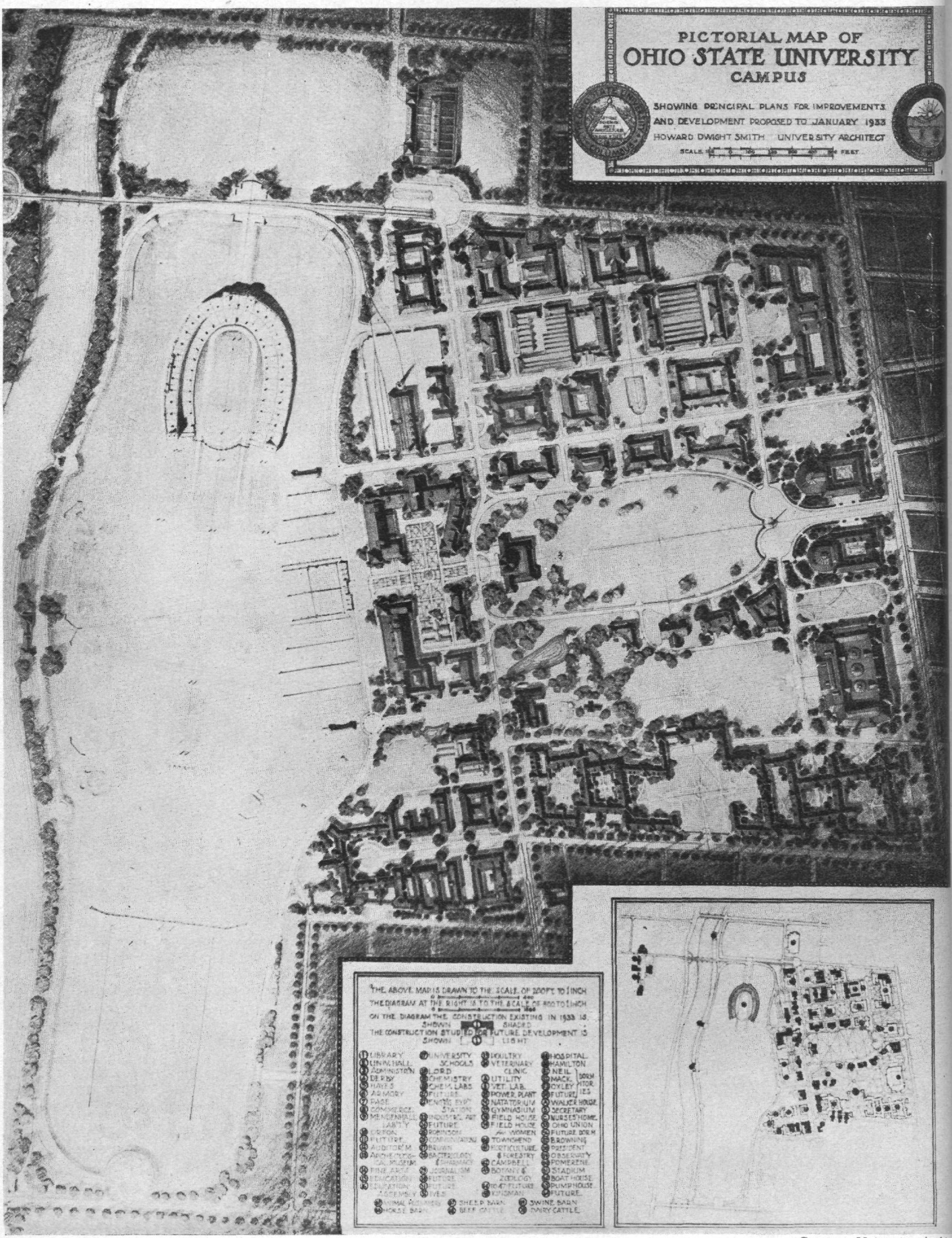


Courtesy University Archite

Description on Page 18

Do You Know Your Campus?

William Fell, Ch.E. II, Karl Albrink, C.E. II, David Wiggins, Ch.E. I

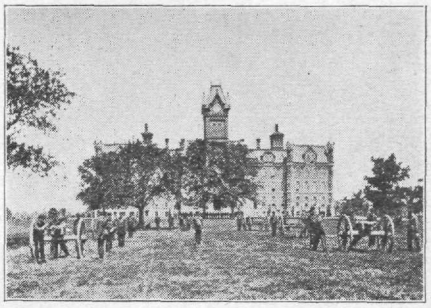
How many students know why Lord Hall is set at such an odd angle or why the Physics Building is so far away from all the other buildings of the Engineering College? The answers to these and similar questions form an interesting and sometimes very amusing history of The Ohio State University campus.

The Ohio State University was founded on a land grant made by an Act of Congress approved by President Lincoln on July 2, 1862. This Act provided that there should be granted to each state an amount of public land equal to 30,000 acres for each senator and representative in Congress to which said state was entitled by the apportionment under the census of 1860. Through the activities of the state Board of Agriculture was brought the passage of the Cannon Act of 1870, the "Charter of the College".

When it was definitely decided to establish a college, the problem of its location became paramount. Even after the Charter was granted, there was much opposition to the idea of another college as is expressed in the statement printed in the Cleveland Herald, "We make prophecy that time will prove the college to be a failure and the fund to have been wasted."

Proposals for the location of the school came in from many counties and after a careful examination of all the sites, Franklin county was decided upon because of its central location. There were several farms in Franklin county that offered probable sites for college. Among these were the Stimmel farm, which was south of Columbus, the Nelson and Ross farms and the land between them and Broad Street, the Minor farm which was south of Greenlawn Cemetery, and the Neil farm north of Columbus. On the fourth ballot the Board of Trustees selected the Neil farm as the location for the campus. Mr. Keller, a member of the Board, later declared that his chief reason for preferring this location was that it was so far removed from the city of Columbus that the contact with city life would not interfere with the studious habits of the young men.

The first building, now called University Hall, opened its doors for the admission of students September 17, 1873. This single building was used not only as the entire college but also as a dormitory. The east wing of University Hall provided living quarters for four members of the faculty. There were bedrooms on the first floor, made by dividing the available area into small rooms with muslin partitions or screens, and in these crude rooms lived all the students who came from places outside Columbus. Their meals were served in the dining room in the basement. Offices, classrooms, laboratories and assembly room, the first library, and all facilities of the infant institution were under one roof.



The original Ohio State University— An early view of University Hall. Notice military formation in the foreground.

Courtesy Ohio State University Monthly

As time passed the college grew. The building program for the first twenty years included, besides the main building and the dormitories, the Mechanical Laboratory (now the Service Building), the old Botany Building (later occupied by the State Department of Health and just lately removed from the front of the new Faculty Building), the first College of Veterinary Medicine (on the site of the Botany and Zoology Building), and the first two Chemistry Buildings, both of which were destroyed by fire, the first in February, 1887, and the second in February, 1889. All these buildings were inexpensively constructed and were of small merit architecturally.

In the period from 1870 to 1908 the idea of having the campus correspond to a large estate was fostered in the mind of Herman Haerlein, the landscape gardener. He believed that the college buildings should correspond to the manor house and the other buildings should be subordinate in location. Some evidence of that idea can be seen today on the Oval. There was a long drive lined with trees that wound across the Oval to University Hall. Although the drive no longer exists, a few of the trees remain to mark its path.

The Olmstead Brothers, landscape architects, suggested the group idea in preference to the informal idea of Haerlein. They stated that the informal idea could not be adhered to, and as a matter of good taste it was necessary to group the buildings with due regard to symmetry and formality. In the preparation of the campus map they did not deviate from this

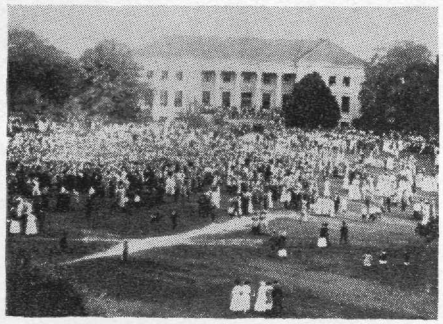
general idea except in the preservation of the informal aspect of Mirror Lake and its surroundings. This spot, which is more richly endowed with tradition than any other on the campus, was the pride of Ohio State for many years.

Before the construction of the Columbus water-purification plant, Mirror Lake was noted for its excellent drinking water and its natural beauty. When the city of Columbus built a large sewer from the Indianola district to the Olentangy River, the beautiful spring was drained and the lake dried up. Soon an attempt was made to restore the spring by drilling deeper, but sulphur water was struck and that well is responsible for the unpleasant odor that emanates from the lake at the present time.

The present plans of the campus are based on two fundamentals: (1) principal and secondary axes, (2) the grouping of buildings carrying related work. Sufficient elasticity is incorporated in these plans so as to permit the solution of future problems.

The principal axis lies east and west between the corner of Fifteenth and High Street and the Library, passing through the center of the Oval. A secondary axis lies north and south between Eleventh Avenue and Woodruff Avenue, passing through Orton Hall and Derby Hall. The west side of this axis, south of Twelfth Avenue, is reserved for women's dormitories. The portion directly east is for men's dormitories. There are other minor axes that determine more closely the location of certain buildings.

In addition to using the axis system, the buildings are grouped according to the subjects taught in them. There are three prominent divisions; the physical, the social, and the biological division, all placed around the library as a center.



Courtesy Ohio State University Monthly

Early View of Oval During Traditional Cane Rush

The physical science division is found in the northern part of the campus. Here the engineering buildings are grouped around the quadrangle much as the buildings in a separate college. The social division is found on the south side of the Oval where Page Hall, Orton Hall and the Commerce Building are located. Just west of the library is the biological division consisting of the Horticulture and Floriculture Building, the Botany and Zoology Building, and Townsend Hall.

In addition to these major divisions there are a number of smaller groups such as the medical division, the veterinary division and the administration buildings. Although there are a number of exceptions to this plan, this general rule enables students to save much time in going to classes.

Even with the rapid growth of the University it was not until August, 1911, that the position of University Architect was created along with an Architect's Advisory Board of seven members. Professor J. N.

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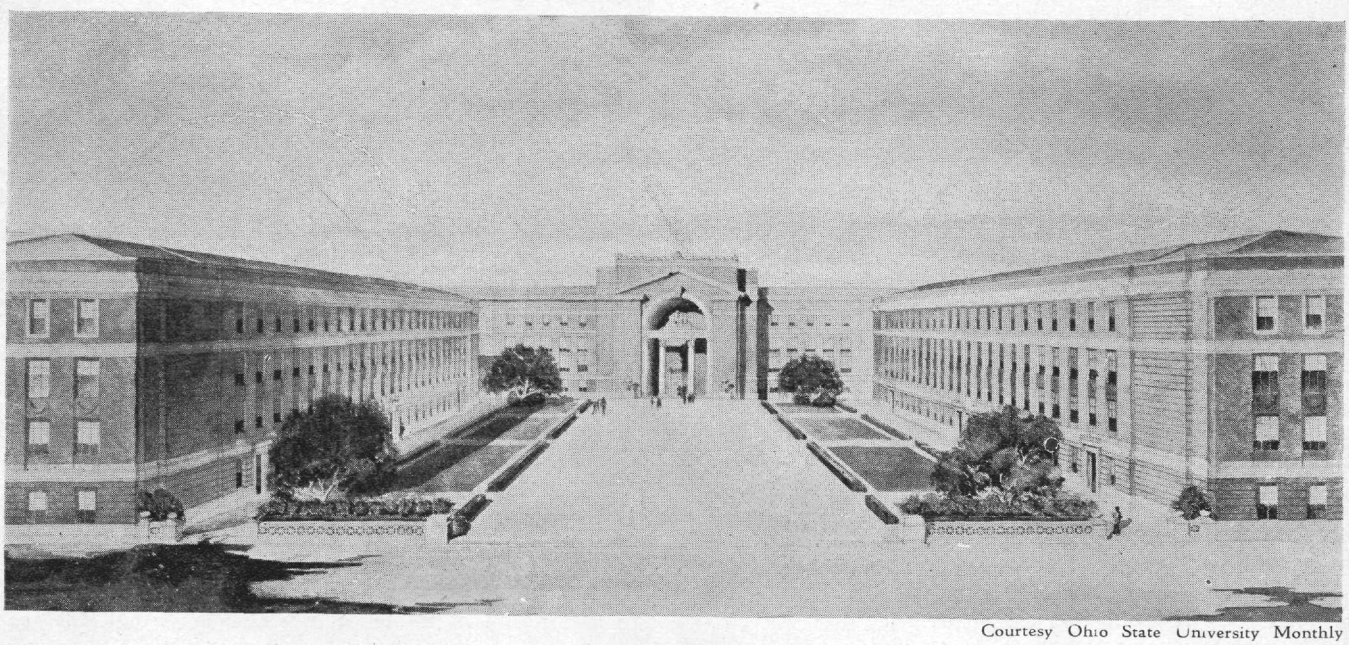

Courtesy Ohio State University Monthly

Artists View of Planned Engineering Quadrangle. Present Chemistry Building at right, Proposed Additions to Robinson Laboratory at Left and to Engineering Experiment Station in Center.

CAMPUS

(Continued from Page 6)

Bradford was elected architect with the special duty of securing orderly development of the campus and the beautification of the grounds. Since that time the University Architect's office has handled this.

Some of the buidings on the campus are worth special attention, not because they are more important than the others, but because of the interesting facts that are associated with their construction.

The Armory, of French Feudal style, was formerly used for instruction in both military science and physical education. Because of its great floor space, Commencement Exercises and social programs that attracted large crowds were held here.

The Physics Building (Mendenhall Laboratory), instead of being located near the other Engineering Buildings, is located on the opposite side of the Oval. Benjamin Franklin Thomas, then Professor of Physics, wanted the building located on the south side of the campus in such a position that at a certain time during the fall a ray of light would come through a hole twelve inches square in the west wall. This he wanted for his physics lectures. Although the hole itself has been plugged, one can still see evidence of its location.

Lord Hall, of English Renaissance architecture, was originally known as the Mines Building. It was built for the Departments of Ceramics, Metallurgy, and Mining. It was named for Professor W. W. Lord, the first Dean of the College of Engineering. The interesting fact about this building is that it is built at an angle with the other buildings on the campus. The reason for this was the University authorities had intended to build an avenue extending from the Armory, then used as the Gymnasium, to a proposed athletic field in the northwestern part of the campus. Another building was to be placed on the other side of the avenue. After it was found that the location of Hayes Hall did not allow enough space, the idea of the second building was abandoned.

Perhaps the most interesting structure on the campus is the Ohio Stadium. The location for such a huge building was a great problem in itself. At first it was proposed to put the stadium at the corner of Eleventh and High where the street car line could be easily reached. It was soon realized, however, that one street car line could not take care of the traffic on the day of a football game and that no parking space was available nearby. The proposal to place the stadium on the site of the present University High School was abandoned for the same reasons. Some thought it would be a good idea to build the stadium in the Oval. This plan was no better than the others for in addition to the facts already mentioned, the greatest disadvantage was the effect the stadium would have on the appearance of the surrounding buildings. A huge structure such as this, 109 feet high, would dwarf all the other buildings on the campus. The architects realized that the only way to prevent this was to place it along the Olentangy River, where the elevation is from twenty-five to thirty feet below that of the University grounds near High Street. This would not only solve the problems arising from the size of the structure, but also would provide adequate space for parking lots and practice fields. Thus the Ohio Stadium was started in 1918.

In the sixty odd years of its existence, Ohio State has grown into one of the leading Universities in the country. This would have been impossible without the marvelous foresight of its founders. Constantly since the first plans were made, the men were looking to-

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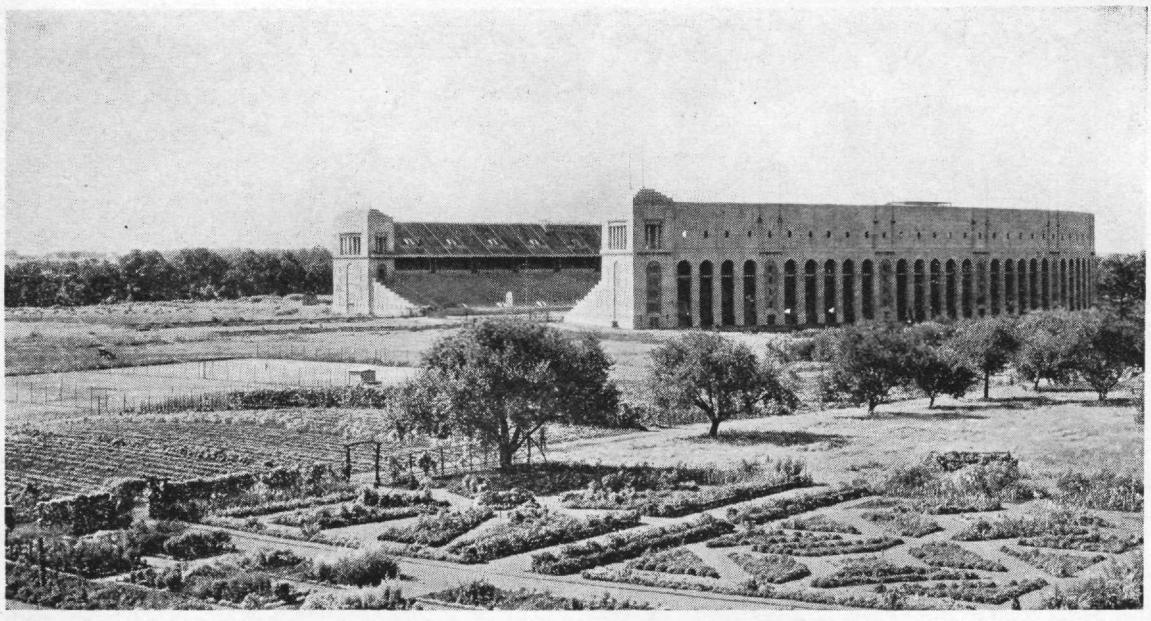

The famed Ohio Stadium

Courtesy Ohio State University Monthly.

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CAMPUS (From Page 14)

ward the future. It is still so. There are a number of buildings that are as yet only plans on paper, but some day they will start to grow.

Eventually there will be a building just opposite the Chemistry Building and identical to it. The Engineering Quadrangle will be in the center and the Engineering Experiment Station will be to the north. However, it will be quite different in outward appearance from the present time. There will be a new front facing the Quadrangle so that it will fit into the architectural lines of the other buildings better.

In addition to changing and reconditioning old buildings there is plenty of room for the new ones.